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Memorandum for: The Record

The attached memorandum was
requested by [redacted]

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[redacted] Two
copies were given to the Vice President,
one to the Secretary of State, and one
to the Secretary of Defense.

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**The International Democratic Union:
A Conservative Transnational**

Summary

The International Democratic Union, a two-year-old conservative grouping heavily influenced by its European members, works with limited political power and a small budget to strengthen democracy and Western security and combat terrorism, drug abuse, and youth unemployment. The IDU has had little success in attracting members from developing regions of the world and its influence there is marginal. The organization supports basic US foreign policy objectives in Central America and in the arms control arena, despite having some members from neutral states. During its meeting this week in Washington, it is likely to emphasize the need for broader US-West European understanding and the desirability of coordinating policy toward the Soviet Bloc and China.

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The International Democratic Union: A Conservative Transnational

The International Democratic Union (IDU) is the youngest and most conservative of transnational political groupings. It was

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This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] of the Office of European Analysis. Questions and comments may be addressed to [redacted] Chief of the European Issues Division, [redacted]

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founded in 1983 to spread conservative beliefs and values beyond Europe's borders and to counteract the activities of the Socialist International (SI) in the Third World. The IDU, with member parties from 17 countries, is the umbrella organization of the European Democratic Union (EDU) and the Pacific Democrat Union (PDU), established in 1978 and 1981 respectively. Despite its international aspirations, the IDU is essentially a European organization around the EDU core. Like other internationals, the IDU has limited political power, although party leaders--particularly those in opposition--value it because media coverage of its activities publicizes their policy positions and enhances their prestige.

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Activities and Funding

Between biennial conferences, various committees meet frequently to discuss and coordinate policy on a wide range of issues. The IDU also sponsors seminars and factfinding missions to help formulate policy toward the world's trouble spots, such as Central America and the Middle East. The highest decisionmaking body of the IDU is the biennial party leaders conference, which starts in Washington this Thursday (25 July) at the invitation of the Republican Party. The conference is likely to focus on issues of special concern to IDU members, such as the strengthening of democracy and human rights, Western security, international terrorism, drug abuse, and youth unemployment.

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Funds come from member contributions. European parties provide one-half of the \$100,000 annual budget, and the US Republican Party and the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party share in funding the other half. The IDU's European affiliate, the EDU, has a separate and slightly larger budget. Among the IDU's European members, according to diplomatic reports, the West German CDU/CSU and the British Tories carry the heaviest financial burden.

Global Reach

The IDU's attempts to increase its profile in the Third World have had little success. The organization has acquired no members in Africa, and the first Latin American members--the Colombian Conservative Party and the Jamaican Labour Party--will be admitted this week at the conference in Washington. There are several reasons for the IDU's difficulties in developing areas:

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* See Appendix for member countries and officers of the IDU.

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- The conservatives' emphasis on a free market economy has less appeal in modernizing countries than the Socialist International's "statist" orientation. Moreover, the SI's considerably larger budget allows it to give more financial support to current and prospective members.
- In Latin America, the IDU competes directly with the Christian Democratic International (CDI) for the allegiance of the region's Christian Democratic parties. Latin American Christian Democrats hesitate to cooperate with the generally more rightwing parties that belong to the IDU for fear that such an association will hurt their electoral chances and their ability to form coalitions with center-left parties. (Similar concerns have also prevented the Christian Democratic parties in Italy and the Benelux countries from joining the IDU.)
- The IDU insists that future associates must support pluralistic democracy, which tends to limit membership to areas of stability. In more volatile regions, conservative parties may resist this demand in favor of "maintaining order." [redacted]

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The IDU's lack of influence in the Third World may lead it to seek limited cooperation with the SI, particularly in Central America. Mock reportedly believes that the IDU and EDU could complement Socialist International activities in areas where they support moderate forces. [redacted]

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Solidarity with the United States

The IDU supports basic US foreign policy objectives. Despite having members from neutral countries, the IDU is strongly pro-Western and anti-Soviet. Chairman Alois Mock of Austria, who also heads the EDU, has firmly rejected a policy of equidistance between the superpowers, arguing that Soviet expansionist goals pose the greatest threat to world stability. The IDU/EDU has emphasized arms control, but has also stressed the West's need to counter the Soviet military buildup. The organization, therefore, has endorsed NATO modernization programs, particularly INF deployment, and the "zero option" in the INF arms control talks. The IDU, moreover, has blamed the lack of progress at the MBFR talks on "Soviet intransigence." [redacted]

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The IDU's views on Central America also closely parallel those of the US Government:

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- The first meeting of the Standing Committee on Foreign

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Affairs in Canberra in 1983 issued a statement condemning Soviet, Cuban, and Nicaraguan activities in the region and endorsing the Contadora process.

- IDU observers at the Salvadoran and Nicaraguan elections praised the democratic and social progress in El Salvador and criticized the Sandinistas' continuing slide toward totalitarianism.
- IDU chairman Mock, after a factfinding trip to Central America in February, supported the conclusions of the Kissinger Commission. [redacted]

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Prospects

The IDU probably will concentrate on strengthening cooperation among conservative parties in industrialized regions. It is likely to emphasize closer ties with both major US political parties to deepen American-West European understanding and coordinate policy toward the East. The IDU and its European affiliate may also seek greater contact with the Communist Bloc. As EDU chairman, Mock visited China in 1981 [redacted]

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[redacted] Mock apparently thinks that such trips provide an important opportunity to point out that conservatives as well as socialists are able to work with the East. [redacted]

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Appendix

Members of the International Democratic Union

Australia	-- Liberal Party (LP)
Austria	-- Austrian People's Party (OVP)
Canada	-- Progressive Conservative Party (PCP)
Cyprus	-- Democratic Rally (DISY)
Denmark	-- Conservative Party (KF)
Finland	-- Conservative Party (KOK)
France	-- Rally for the Republic (RPR)
Germany	-- Christian Democratic Union (CDU) Christian Social Union (CSU)
Greece	-- New Democracy (ND)
Japan	-- Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
New Zealand	-- National Party (NP)
Norway	-- Conservative Party (H)
Portugal	-- Social Democratic Center (CDS)
Spain	-- Popular Alliance (AP) Popular Democratic Party (PDP)
Sweden	-- Moderate Coalition (MS)
United Kingdom	-- Conservative Party (CP)
United States	-- Republican Party (RP)

Associate Members

Malta -- Nationalist Party (PN)
 European Democrat Students
 European Union of Women
 European Medium and Small Business Union
 International Young Democrat Union

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IDU/EDU/PDU Officers

Chairmen

IDU/EDU -- Alois Mock of the Austrian People's Party
PDU -- Brian Talboys of the New Zealand National Party

Vice-Chairmen

Ulf Adelsohn, Sweden
Richard V. Allen, USA
Sir John Atwill, Australia
Jacques Chirac, France
John Selwyn Gummer, United Kingdom
Susumu Nikaido, Japan
Franz Josef Strauss, Germany

Treasurer

Allan Lawrence, Canada

Executive Secretary

Scott Hamilton, United Kingdom

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A Conservative Transnational

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